

BOOK REVIEWS

ISLAM AND PAKISTAN'S IDENTITY

Javid Iqbal

Lahore: Vanguard Books, Ltd., 2003.

Pages 391, Price Rs. 495.00.

The author of the book under review, Barrister Dr. Javid Iqbal, the former Chief Justice of Lahore High Court and a Judge of Supreme Court of Pakistan argues that the founding fathers of Pakistan desired the country to be a modern democratic state. He lays emphasis on *ijtihad* to bring Islamic laws in conformity with the needs of the modern world. His book is in line with his earlier works *Ideology of Pakistan* (1950) and the *Legacy of Quaid-i-Azam* (1967).

To prove his thesis he draws inferences from Muslim history, although he wrongly refers to it as Islamic history. He discusses *shariah* and secularism, *jihad* and religious terrorism, conflict between Muslim world and the West, challenges faced by Pakistan, reconciliation of Western ideas with Islam and the peaceful co-existence with the West and other civilizations.

Citing *Mithaq-i-Madina*, he establishes that all citizens of the first Muslim state, i.e., Muslims, Jews, Christians and pagan population, were treated equally and that the entire population, irrespective of their ethnicity or religion, were taken as "one people". The document said "among them there exists sincere friendship, honourable dealing and no treachery". Being a single community they were expected to defend the territories of the state, and to bear expenses for the same.

Later, Muslim rulers, apart from *shariah*, usually enforced man-made laws through a royal decree and ordinance and possibly as a "sovereign" act. For instance, he cites Ala-ud-Din Khilji whose policy was determined by what he considered good for the state without caring whether it was right or wrong according to *shariah*. The Mughal rulers of India enhanced or commuted the sentences prescribed by *shariah*. Hindus were appointed at higher and lower positions in civil administration as well as in the armed forces. A lady, Razia Sultana, daughter of Iltutmish, was made the ruler in Delhi, perhaps for the first time in India.

The author, who himself is a jurist, is of the opinion that the conventional Muslim jurists "always distinguished the political order from the legal order of the state of Islam." The wielders of power "ruled through edicts and ordinances in addition to and sometime in conflict with the *shariah* laws." The author therefore pleads that the "*shariah* laws had to be modernized through the process of '*Ijtihad*' in the Parliament."

Ijtihad is also necessary because he attributes the decline of the Muslim power in India to the general lack of creative and innovative activity, an

intellectual stagnation that had gripped the *Ulema* and *Fuqaha* who were unable to offer solutions for the spiritual and temporal problems of the Muslim community in the changing times.

Referring to the genesis of Pakistan, he points out that Hindus and Muslims adhered to two diametrically opposed religions and cultures. The inter-communal antagonism and riots became frequent after the death of Aurangzeb. During the twentieth century, all attempts of Hindu and Muslim leaders failed to arrive at an agreement for the sharing of political power, which again gave rise to the inter-communal problem.

He traces the revival of militant “Wahabi” Islam in India to the 18th century when the Mughal Empire was disintegrating and the *Ulema* and *Mushaikh* were pitched against each other. Syed Ahmed Bareilvi and others introduced puritanical religious reform movement similar to that of Ibn Abd al Wahhab of Arabia. They struggled against Sikh rule around Peshawar in the North West and against Hindu overlords in the Eastern Bengal. After British supremacy, they branded India as *Dar-ul-Harb* (Country of War) which requires *jihad* or *hijrat* (i.e. war or migration) against *Dar-ul-Islam* (Country of Islam).

But pragmatic and liberal reformers obtained decisions from both Sunni and Shia Schools of thought that India was not *Dar-ul-Harb*. A new category was invented called *Dar-ul-Aman* (Country of Security). Despite the Quranic verse that obedience is to be rendered to the wielders of authority “from amongst you”, it was held that Muslims could obey their non-Muslim rulers. The Muslims thus learned the necessity of *ijtihad* to find solutions to new and complex situations.

The reaction of Muslim world to the new ideas and aggressive policies of the West has been different from country to country. In Turkey, “Kamal Ata-turk [Ata turk] obliterated the influence of *Ulema* from the religious life of the Turks.” In Muslim India, reformers like Syed Ahmad Khan and Muhammad Iqbal endeavoured to form a new group of *Ulema* who would interpret Islam in an “enlightened, motivated and rational manner” to evolve a Muslim society with a “modern outlook on life”. On the other hand, the conservative or fundamentalist Muslims rejected modernity. Secularism is defined by them as “Godlessness” and profane.

Those who rejected western ideas were extremists and conservatives called “Wahabis”. The cooperative Muslims were called “Westernised”. The third category, of integrationists, was called “liberal-reformers”. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, who was a liberal-reformer, was for separate Muslim status, headed one group. Muhammad Iqbal, the poet-philosopher, following his thought articulated the formation of a Muslim state in Northwest India. They eventually founded Muslim League and achieved Pakistan. The other group consisting of most of the members of Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Hind joined the Indian National Congress.

Muslim liberal thinkers differentiate between “modernity and westernization.” The founding fathers of Pakistan have “incorporated the modern ideas of the West within the Islamic culture. In reality Pakistan is the product of the fusion of new Western ideas with Islam.” During the past fifty years, in spite of drifting away from the ideals of the founding fathers, the preponderant majority of Pakistani Muslims has always been “moderate” and subscribes to the liberal views of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammed Ali Jinnah.

According to him, Jinnah drew his inspiration and spiritual support from Iqbal. Jinnah’s position was that of a “liberal” and ‘modernist’ Muslim. Jinnah aspired to establish a liberal democratic Muslim welfare state in Pakistan. In his earlier work the author had said: “The Islamic State of Pakistan, as envisaged by Quaid-i-Azam, embraces the qualities of an ideal ‘Secular State’.”

The Two-Nation Theory enabled Muslims “to develop a consciousness of their identity and forged a cultural and social solidarity, which ultimately formed an ideological basis for the creation of Pakistan.” They did not visualize Pakistan as a “specific kind of sectarian Muslim state”. Instead, they reconciled the traditional Islamic values with modern liberal ideas. This, according to the author, provided a political and intellectual framework for a new Islamic state.

The federal parliamentary system, which guarantees human rights, treats all its citizens equally and upholds the rule of law, is not repugnant to Islamic injunctions. It is enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan 1973. The Islamic inspiration is reflected in the chapters on “Principles of State Policy” and the constitution of the “Council of Islamic Ideology” to advise the assemblies in Islamic law making.

He blames Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and President Zia-ul-Haq for taking a number of steps on the demands of religious parties. The former declared the Ahmadis as the minority community and the latter introduced laws discriminating between Muslims and non-Muslims, etc which were not approved by earlier governments. This change disseminated intolerance and sectarianism, which increased to such an extent that rival groups of sectarian terrorists did not hesitate to slaughter their fellow Muslims even while they were praying in their places of worship.

He correctly points out that Pakistan has been a victim of all kinds of terrorism: domestic, international as well as transnational. In his view, of all the problems confronting Pakistan, the rapid growth of religious terrorism is certainly the worst. It is frightening to realize that the idealism, which laid the foundations of Pakistan, is being overtaken by terrorism that can demolish the pluralistic civil society and the founder’s vision of a democratic state of Pakistan.

As for challenges to Pakistan, apart from the so-called Islamisation, the author laments the tussle between Presidents and Prime Ministers for

power and recurrent intervention of the army. He correctly brings out that there was a complete departure from the implementation of Islam in Pakistan, as visualized by the founding fathers, and from their aspiration of constructing permanent democratic political structures in the country.

He has adequately defended his conclusion that Pakistan's "ideology is derived from a liberal, humanistic and egalitarian vision of a state, which is to be run according to modern, democratic and Islamic ideals interpreted on the basis of '*Jihad*' in every sphere of the collective life of the people of Pakistan. It is the responsibility of those who wield power to persuade and encourage the educated and dedicated young men and women to grasp this opportunity to fulfil the dream of the founding fathers of Pakistan."

He somewhat digresses from the subject of his book when he discusses the concept of clash of civilization, explains the meaning of jihad, distinguishes terrorism from freedom struggle of a majority against minority rule, brings out the factors responsible for Muslim antagonism against the West, the double moral standards of the US and its allies where Muslims are involved which in turn promotes aggressive extremism in Muslim countries, and the change in the thinking of the West about Islam after September 11, 2001. But this discussion also adds to the value of the book ■.

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WAR TALK

Arundhati Roy,
South End Press, Massachusetts, 2003.
Pages: 142.

Like her previous book *The God of Small Things*, Arundhati Roy's recent book *War Talk* is also the expression of her deep concern and contemplation on human security issues. Arundhati Roy has been a social activist highlighting the pressing issues such as environment and basic human rights. This book comprises six chapters; is cogently written, that engage the reader's attention. It begins with the explanation of the general apathy towards nuclear war and its horrifying consequences. Whereas, the threats of nuclear holocaust are rising, there is lamentable indifference among the great powers, towards the implementation of the nuclear non-proliferation regimes. The nuclear weapons have held the entire populace of the belligerent countries hostage. The possibility of a nuclear confrontation or a crisis is not a question of only two armies experiencing the anxieties of nuclear brinkmanship. The dread of a nuclear war and the massive annihilation that could follow as a consequence of

a nuclear exchange have deprived every individual of the basic security that a state is supposed to ensure. This is the very beginning of terror and insecurity. The ideas like 'Ahimsa' - the pacifist view of life, which although might not be the most popular idea in South Asia has gradually degenerated, and receded into oblivion. The author has criticised the political leaders for not being able to practice and promote the spirit of democracy. Analysing the fear of annihilation and the degenerating of moral values, the author hypothesises that democracy might not be the definite solution for the problems of governance in the region. This is because of different social structures, where the states are still struggling with two systems, the pre-colonial and the post-colonial. They have yet to find their identities as nation states in modern world. This dichotomy has led to the emergence of split societies in the region. While one group is barely keeping body and soul together, the others compete in the race of technological innovation with the affluent states. For democracy to flourish, the gap between the haves and the have-nots must be minimised.

Presenting her own views about the domestic political culture in India, the author has criticised the Hindu politicians for raising communal tensions and antagonism by their chauvinistic and racist rhetoric. The mass killing of Muslims in Gujarat has left a permanent scar on the psyche of many humane Indians. Indian politics has been transformed into an aristocratic mafia of extremists with a name Sangh Parivar, personifying them as a joint family similar to the fascists under Benito Mussolini. The author has criticised the ruling BJP government, which shows her courage and conviction of beliefs. Taking the idea of unjust societies further, the author has drawn an analogy of the September 11, 2001, incident to some previous occurrences in history, which according to her, have come back to haunt the developed states namely the United States (US) and United Kingdom (UK). These included the illegal investiture of Augusto Pinochet in Chile, leading to an aristocratic and tyrannical regime that killed thousand of Chileans. Pinochet assumed power on 11 September 1973, with the support of the CIA. The other example is that of the persecution of Palestinians under the British mandate system, which came into force on 11 September 1922, in the Middle East. This gradually usurped the Palestinians of their right to exist as citizens of Palestine.

The author shows notable respect for thinkers like Noam Chomsky, who in their writings have highlighted the corrupted political systems that were the basis of the US Empire of today. Agreeing with Chomsky, she considers that US Empire was being on immoral grounds and through immoral means, like the massive enslavement of the African race. It seems that despite the incidents like September 11, 2001 the US is still bent upon pursuing the realist agenda. While explaining these incidents, the author enlivens the text by quoting some references that might not be traditionally academic, like the revolutionary songs *Buffalow Soldier* by Bob Marley and *Imagine* by John Lennon. However, the effects such songs had on the opinion formulation of

the people cannot be underrated. The book is written employing the modern tools of research, requiring references to be of an academic nature; however, such unconventional references are a welcome change for the reader. The presentation and expression of the writer is simple, enabling the reader to easily assimilate the intricate ideas. It also presents a thought, which is nothing short of being revolutionary. It is through debate between the conformist and revolutionary ideas that a decent and developed society can be cultivated. In this perspective the book is of great academic value.

The author is of the opinion that despite the great sufferings sustained by mankind in the course of history, it has not learnt a lesson and is still moving towards self-annihilation that it set out to prevent. The beliefs of the modern leaders are as distorted now, as they were at the time of their nuclear attack on Japan. The extremists, be they Westerns, the Hindus or the Islamists, need to be outlawed, before they lead the world towards the path of destruction. However, the dark clouds do have a silver lining. This hope is fortified, when we consider the example of the recent general elections in India where the poor people, had their voices heard and brought about a significant political change. Similarly, the developing countries and their people have their voice, which is their only weapon. The only way to confront injustices is to raise your voice and concerns in a more proactive manner, by standing up and being counted. ■

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THE AFGHANISTAN CRISIS, ISSUES AND PERSPECTIVES

K. Warikoo (ed.), New Delhi: Bhavana Books and Prints, 2002.

Pages 523. Price. \$50.

Editor of the book *The Afghanistan Crisis, Issues and Perspectives* Professor K. Warikoo is the Chairperson of Center for South and Central and South East Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. His major publications include *Central Asia and Kashmir: A study in the Context of Anglo-Russian Rivalry* (New Delhi: 1989); *Ethnicity and Politics in Central Asia* (Co-editor) (New Delhi: 1992) *Central Asia: Emerging New Order* (Editor) (New Delhi: 1995), *Society and Culture in the Himalayas* (Editor) (New Delhi: 1995), *Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh: Linguistic Predicament* (Co-editor) (New Delhi: 1996), *Gujjars of Jammu and Kashmir* (Editor) (Bhopal: 2001) and *Bamiyan: Challenge to World Heritage* (New Delhi: 2002).

The book under review presents various perspectives on the Afghanistan crisis ranging from ethno-politics, access to Central Asian oil and gas, human rights, refugee situation, position of women, role and response of

regional and extra-regional powers and the rise of Taliban. Basically the editor tries to cover the social, political, and strategic dimensions of the Afghan crisis. The authors also try to go beyond the consequences of the conflict and give a futuristic view to highlight the gravity of the problem. The articles are generally of good quality, but at places they lack objectivity.

Scholars from India, Australia, Central Asian Republics, Pakistan and United States have contributed to this volume which provides information about the situation in Afghanistan under the Taliban and its implications for peace and security in Central and South Asia. Located at the crossroads of Central, South and West Asia and sharing its borders with Central Asia on the north, Chinese province of Xinjiang in the east, Iran on the west and southwest and Pakistan on the south and southeast, Afghanistan occupies a unique geostrategic position in the region. In the Post-Cold War period, which witnessed the demise of USSR, establishment of an Islamic state and the rise of Taliban, Afghanistan remained at the centre stage of regional and international politics.

The articles on the impacts of Afghan war on the neighbouring states are quite thought provoking. They cover relations of Afghanistan with the United States, Pakistan, Central Asia, Iran, Russia, India and China and the role played by these powers in contributing to turmoil in Afghanistan and their convergences and divergences on the issue of Afghanistan.

Sultan Shahin in "The Taliban view of Jihad and the Islamic Precepts" admits that fighting is only permitted in a particular situation according to Islamic values. He quotes many Islamic scholars to substantiate his arguments while terming the jihadi elements in contemporary politics as "rhetoric." He argues that these elements are detrimental to the image of Muslims following a peace loving religion, 'Islam', which literally means peace.

Afsir Karim in "Taliban Phenomenon and the Security Environment" seems irrelevant to the current situation and many of the predictions have proved to be wrong. He has claimed that Taliban-Pakistan together represent a dangerous strategic alliance between two forces of radical Islam. The author has a view that Pakistani intelligence trained and motivated the Taliban.

"The Role of Outside Actors in Afghanistan" has written by Amin Saikal raises many queries which need to be verified on the parameters of history. For example he writes that Pakistan's former military ruler General Zia-ul-Haq promoted the political supremacy of the Pashtuns as a historically dominant force in Afghanistan. He also points that a shift in US policy for close ties with India has already gained momentum. He accuses US for its myopic policies. The author believes Vladimir Putin has actively sought to coordinate efforts to increase international pressure on the Taliban.

"Confronting Creeping Invasions: Afghanistan, the UN and the World Community", by William Maley is divided into five sections. The first

section is about use of surrogates by states in modern conflicts. The second gives a brief background of the Afghan conflict and mentions about the international involvement. The third section is about Pakistan's involvement in the conflict. The fourth-controversial section is the comparison and contrast of Pakistani backing for Taliban and its alleged support for freedom movement in Kashmir. In the last section, the author discusses the few specific challenges which the 'creeping invasion' poses for a unipolar international order and for the UN and offers some remedies.

The article written by S.D Muni on "India's Afghan Policy: Emerging from the Cold" contains some interesting details about India's foreign policy towards the former Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan was driven by its domestic and internal political situation. India's pro-Soviet foreign policy prevented India from adopting any anti-Soviet stance on the issue of Afghanistan. He also highlights that the Soviet presence in Afghanistan provided justification to USA and Pakistan for their presence in Afghanistan.

K.Warikoo, the editor of the book has written a chapter on "Shadow of Afghanistan over Kashmir". The article starts with the historical background of Kashmir issue. He also mentions how Islam has been radicalised in this troubled region. According to him the Iranian revolution played a significant role. The Post-Soviet Afghanistan emerged as an inspiration for the Islamic extremists in Kashmir and they also extended the concept of Jihad into Kashmir. The author feels that Islam and Pakistan are the basic factor behind the Kashmir freedom movement while he ignored the rest of the important events and factors. He has not mentioned that the end of Cold War was the era of sea change all over the world and almost all the developing world rose against US "imperialism." UN resolution on Kashmir and India's acceptance of these resolutions have not been adequately dealt with.

The book does not comprehend the issues about Durand Line and status of tribal areas of Pakistan. Any future historian can focus on the changed political and strategic dimensions of the region while analysing the US war against terrorism. The book provides a different view for those scholars who work on Afghanistan and South Asia but may not merit a major academic contribution on Afghanistan. On the whole, the book is somewhat short on objective analysis, making unsubstantiated statements and heavily relying on Indian version of Afghan affairs. Unverified and sometimes distorted facts and events distract from the academic worth of the book. However despite its limitation, the book is recommended for readers who want to know the Indian perspective. ■

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GLOBALIZATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Joseph E. Stiglitz

W.W. Norton, New York, 2002

The book *Globalization and Its Discontents* by Joseph E. Stiglitz, was published in 2002. He is a Nobel laureate, a Columbia University economics professor and a 'Washington insider'. He is the founder of a reputed economics journal, *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*. What the writer has felt in different capacities affected his views, specially about globalization and development and its effects on the developing countries.

The book under review studies how to limit the negative fallout of the capitalist system in order to reap the benefits of globalization. In this regard, the writer has given many recommendations. He has raised many important questions e.g., how can globalization be managed differently? Why have some financial institutions failed? What are the inherent causes of their failure and how they can be reformed? Answers to such questions could be helpful for success and useful solution to the problems facing the developing world—trapped in the economic mire.

However the writer feels that one positive aspect is that, there is awareness at the political and economic front that something drastically needs to be done about the problems. Two positive moves in this regard are the treaty on landmines and the Doha Round of talks on WTO. The writer perceives that globalization is a force generally for good, but has to be managed differently. Today, financial institutions like IMF have been accused of promoting vested interests, focusing on short term goals rather than long term stability, where the strategy of economic bailouts has already failed. The writer feels that low wages is not a solution to unemployment, where high interest rates bankrupt the firms. Today, we feel that humanity is at a crossroads. Reformation and reshaping of financial institutions is necessary to make globalization successful in order to realize its potential. The financial institutions should be reshaped in a way that may help to ensure that this goal is accomplished. One step in this regard is to publish the effects of IMF policies on different countries on varied sectors. There is a need for transparency and accountability. Besides, there should be an open discussion of alternative policies; moreover, whereas free access to information and free press can also ensure a better check. There should be greater participation by the developing countries in trade talks, whereas policies adopted should also reflect their participation at WTO. At the World Bank, there should be greater awareness to target the scourge of poverty.

According to the writer, the phenomenon of globalization cannot be reversed; what is instead needed is to manage globalization with a more

humane face. As an economist, he comes to the conclusion that the realistic policies should tackle the problem.

The author believes that so far, globalization has not been managed properly. It is basically due to excessive capital market liberalization without any regulatory framework, as illustrated in the case of South East Asian crisis. An economic boom that collapsed, took the world by shock and surprise. In Russia, instead of gradual transition, it was the rapid capitalization from communist to capitalist free market economy that failed. To the writer, Washington's policy of stressing on free markets is a blend of ideology and bad science.

The author has provided many suggestions to correct these inherent weaknesses. Some of these include improved bankruptcy reforms, greater reliance on bankruptcies and stand stills, less reliance on bail outs, improved banking regulations, risk management, safety nets and improved response to crises. Countries around the world still face exchange rate risks, which can be remedied to some extent by buying insurance against these fluctuations in the international capital markets. Safety nets can be improved by providing employment in such sectors as small scale businesses and agriculture sectors.

The writer has provided a fair analysis of the situation, specially in the case of South East Asia. Today, it is acknowledged that excessive financial liberalization without any regulatory framework runs inherent risks, specially when the developing countries don't have strong financial institutions to absorb the shock e.g., a mature stock market etc. It is also conceded that capital is pro-cyclical in nature. It flows out of a country in crisis and flows in when there is an economic boom. A prudent government can only manage the fallouts when there are riots in a country, where the situation further deteriorates. There is very less incentive for investors to invest in a country when there are recessions and long periods of depression and slumps. Such crises can also spread to other countries as they did in South East Asia. However in such crises, sometimes the developed countries benefit in several ways. For instance, it has also been realized that the real estate business is very risky. Thailand is an example of this phenomenon, where office buildings and huge plazas are unoccupied. This is based on the assumption that market is a monolithic force that works on perfect information and can determine its way without government intervention detrimental to market and business. The real estate business is usually a bubble that bursts, when the capacity limit is exceeded. Hence, it is advisable to spend more in the manufacturing sector that generates wealth and creates jobs.

The book brings out that there are many countries in the world where per capita income is comparable to that of the US but there is greater equitable distribution of wealth, lesser poverty and greater democratic dispensation than the United States like Norway and Sweden. The development only benefits a handful of elite, corporate magnates and industrialists, but is not geared to

ensure fair and equitable distribution of wealth. This would mean education and health facilities for all, with the goal of 'sustainable development' as top of the agenda.

Stiglitz takes a bold step in discussions on IMF and other international institutions; however, this is not to undermine these institutions or attribute conspiracy theories but to point out their inherent weaknesses. He is quite aware that there is a growing realization to rectify the spill over effects and the negative fallouts of globalization. If, as a result of this debate, some favourable solution is reached, it would result in the overall betterment of humanity.

The author has given a reference of Keynes, a well known British economist, who believed that negative repercussions of capitalism, entailing depressions and recessions, could be tackled only if the government could take care of issues like unemployment etc. U.S followed this strategy and attained high growth rates. The writer holds the view that today globalization is again at crossroads as it was during the Great Depression in the 1930's. Hence a bailout strategy for capitalism to succeed is required.

The writer echoes the sentiments of many in developing countries who demand abolition of institutions like the IMF. There is a feeling that if economic recession occurs in developed countries, aid is provided by 'design' only.

However, he believes that such institutions must be reformed. There should be more transparency and accountability. IMF does not protect vested interests as it is accused of. There is a state of euphoria about foreign direct investment but its inherent risks have not been fully realized. A scientific analysis should be made of the economic policies of the past decades by studying instances where the market failed and where the government interventions worsened the situation. Throughout the world, governments are responsible for health and education. Markets, by themselves cannot solve every social problem of inequality, unemployment, pollution etc. The writer has tried to bring a balanced perspective to the World Bank to resolve difficult problems facing the developing world. There is always asymmetry of information, demand and supply in the market together with inherent slumps and depressions associated with capitalism. The author advocates a gradual transformation of traditional economies to free market economy to adapt to new challenges.

The author feels that the developing countries must take charge of their destiny. They have to sort out their problems, chart out a middle path, make their own choices, design a model according to their needs, and pursue the goal of sustainable development.

By adopting a bold stance the author has articulated his arguments well. He deserves appreciation for studying the situation analytically and logically without getting into conspiracy theories. There is a lot one can learn

from this account. It is an interesting and thoughtful study for scholars and practitioners interested in globalization, IMF and other related issues, as well as for general students of political economy. ■

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